



OCTOBER TIP SAVINGS: Over \$480/YR
Avoided Emissions of CO₂: Over 500 lbs./YR

\$USTAINABILITY \$AVINGS TIP

LOCAL FOOD MOVEMENTS GAIN MOMENTUM

Reduce your food miles with a garden or support your local grower.

October provides a long awaited respite from the summer heat, and a chance to once again enjoy the outdoors. For the Arizona desert, it is also the start of our best vegetable gardening season. It's time to put in your winter garden – that includes many herbs and any of the leafy vegetables (lettuce, Swiss chard, spinach), root vegetables (onions, beets, carrots), and those from the cabbage family (broccoli, kohlrabi, cauliflower).

Besides saving money, there are many benefits to growing your own garden. You'll get exercise and relieve stress, eat healthier foods with better nutrition and less pesticides, and it can be fun and rewarding for you and your family. Added benefits are that the food tastes better, and you'll reduce your carbon footprint. As we look at our impact on the planet, the number of miles our food travels from the grower to our plate are called "food miles." More food miles = more fuel used = more CO₂ emissions.

If you can't, or prefer not to install your own garden, or if you want to supplement your harvest, visit one of the many local farmers markets, or you can buy a share of a local farmer's harvest. This relatively new concept is called Community Supported Agriculture or CSA. When you join a CSA, you basically pay a subscription fee in return for a weekly basket of seasonal produce from the farmer. Sustainability is about more than just the environment. It also includes strong communities and a healthy economy. So, supporting local farmers just makes sense.

**Discover the benefits
of buying local.**

CHECKLIST FOR SAVINGS

- ☐ Attend a monthly *Living Green Workshop Series* program to learn more about sustainability. Our Oct. 10 program is **Sustainable Desert Vegetable Gardening for Food & Fun**. Visit www.mesaaz.gov/sustainability.
- ☐ Visit the City of Mesa library for books on desert vegetable gardening, square foot gardening, and edible landscaping. See our list of books at www.mesalibrary.org/research/links/living-green.aspx.
- ☐ The City of Mesa Solid Waste Management Department offers the following programs and information. Visit the Web sites indicated or call (480) 644-2222 for assistance.
 - **Backyard Composting Program** – compost containers are available to Mesa residents for a \$5.00 refundable deposit, visit www.mesarecycles.org.
 - **Steps to Successful Composting** gives you simple tips to recycle your kitchen waste into a beneficial garden amendment, visit www.mesaaz.gov/waste/successful_composting.aspx.
 - **Natural Recipes for Home & Garden** provides helpful hints to make your home & garden environmentally friendly, visit www.mesaaz.gov/waste/natural_recipes.aspx.

RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION

- **Vegetable Gardening:** The UofA Maricopa County Extension has guides on vegetable gardening, soil prep and gardening seasons – (602) 827-8200 or visit www.cals.arizona.edu/maricopa/garden/pubs.htm#Vegetable.
- **Farmer's Markets:** The Arizona Community Farmers Markets Association provides a listing of all active markets – (623) 848-1234 or visit www.arizonafarmersmarkets.com.
- **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Membership:** Visit www.localharvest.org to find a CSA near you.

\$START SAVING

Start saving money and reduce your food miles, while doing your part for *building a sustainable community*. Visit our Web site for more sustainability savings tips.

Learn to live Green